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MERRICK COUNTY.

County, lying in the Platte Valley, many advantages to those seeking the West. The soil is a dark, sandy loam, very productive, and not affected by wet weather or drouth. The land consists of bottom and table lands, and undulating prairie, watered by the Platte River, Prairie and Silver Creeks. Being in direct communication with the extensive coal fields to the west of us, by way of the Union Pacific Rail Road, fuel of the very best quality can be had in abundance.

As regards the productiveness of the land in this county, much might be said; but we confine ourselves to the following staples: The average yield of wheat is from 25 to 35 bushels per acre; corn, from 50 to 75 bushels. Root crops of every description yield largely, and find ready market in the mining districts to the west of us, inhabited, as they are, by a class of people who, giving no time or attention to agricultural pursuits, must necessarily draw largely on this State for many of their supplies.

The lands of the Union Pacific Railroad Company in this county amount to something like fifty thousand acres, ranging from \$3 to \$8 per acre.

During the present year about thirty good, substantial frame school houses have been built, at an average cost of One Thousand Dollars each, which will compare favorably with the best of school buildings to be found anywhere in the eastern States. Settlers in this county are, therefore, afforded an excellent opportunity to educate their children. In these school houses, religious services are held by the different denominations, and we have no hesitancy in asserting that the church and school privileges of Merrick county are vastly superior to those of county west of, and equally as good as those of the old counties lying along the Missouri River.

The financial condition of the county is indeed encouraging. We have erected an imposing brick Court House at Lone Tree (the County Seat), at a net cost of \$25,000, and steps are being taken towards bridging the Platte River opposite Lone Tree. This will bring an immense trade from the counties situated south of us, and will also open up the lands on the south side of the river to settlers. This will prove a great benefit to all. A water power grist and sawmill are in successful operation within five miles of Lone Tree, so that it is no longer necessary for the farmer to sell his wheat at a low price and pay high figures for his flour and feed.

This is the first water mill that has been constructed on the Platte river, and now that the experiment has proven a success, we may confidently expect to see other like mills, factories, woolen and paper mills, etc., erected all along the banks of the Platte.

There is a strong probability that the Pawnee Reservation to the north of us, containing something like fifty thousand acres of as desirable land as can be found in the West, will shortly be annexed to this county and thrown open to settlement.

CHAPMAN.

Is beautifully situated on the U. P. R. R., and is the next station west of Lone Tree, the enterprising County Seat. The Platte river runs one and a half miles from this point on the south, and Prairie Creek 3 miles on the north. Distant from Omaha 143 miles. Located as it is, in the most fertile and productive portion of the great Platte Valley—the garden of the West—with nothing but the very best of prairie lands for many miles around, its vicinity presents, with its natural advantages, a country which cannot be surpassed for agricultural pursuits and purposes in the West. Most of the Government land for many miles around is already located by actual settlers who are already pushing on all kinds of improvements with vigor and enterprise. School houses are already built in many places, and children can have good privileges for obtaining education. Along the Platte river are hundreds of acres of Government and R. R. timber lands, from which settlers can obtain fuel very cheap for some years. Water is obtained by sinking from ten to twenty feet. Chapman, with its rail road facilities for business, and close proximity to water power, with such an abundantly producing soil surrounding it, cannot fail to become one of the best points in the State for men of business to locate in. At the present time it contains two large general merchandise Stores, a Post Office, Blacksmith Shop, and Shoe Shop. ~~A good hotel is in progress,~~ and a short distance from town is a first-class water power Grist and Saw Mill, also a Steam Saw Mill. During the past year a School House has been erected here at a cost of \$1,800 dollars, and furnished with modern school furniture, insuring a school for at least nine months in the year. In this building religious services are held regularly, and church societies are formed with many members. Men with means will here find good and profitable investments for capital, while mechanics, with a limited amount of money, can here start business which, in the natural course of events, must prove successful as the country becomes older. Any information concerning Chapman and vicinity will be furnished by addressing either of the undersigned.

J. E. MORRILL,
LEAKE & REED.

